

**Kevin J. Gardner**

*New Uncollected Poems by John Betjeman*  
(English / Arts and Sciences)

John Betjeman's *\_Collected Poems\_* remains the definitive volume of his poetry, though it makes no claim to be a "complete" edition. It is in fact a collection of those poems that Betjeman's long-time editor, Jock Murray, felt most deserving of publication. This volume is thus the product of a singular editorial vision; it does not, however, reflect Betjeman's own view of his publishable work. In fact, Murray's forceful vision and persuasive opinions often prevailed over Betjeman's own wishes for the publication of his poems. As a result, dozens of his completed poems, many of them already published in magazines and newspapers, were excluded from the *\_Collected Poems\_*. In 1982, Bevis Hillier produced a volume of Betjeman's *\_Uncollected Poems\_*, containing 29 of these excluded poems; these have since been added to subsequent editions of the *\_Collected Poems\_*. However, a large number of his completed poems (at least one hundred and perhaps more) remain to be collected. While most (though not all) of these verses were published at one time or other, today they linger obscurely and inaccessibly, crumbling in archives or preserved in microform. Thus hidden from the legions of Betjeman's ardent readers, these poems are in danger of being forgotten forever. I am therefore proposing the publication of a volume that would contain those previously uncollected poems of Betjeman's, and I am already in preliminary negotiations with Continuum, which published my two previous editions of Betjeman's work. I can obtain copies of most of the uncollected poems via interlibrary services; however, perhaps twenty-five percent have never been published and exist only as typescripts in archives at the University of Victoria, Yale University, the University at Buffalo, the British Library, the National Library of Scotland, and Oxford's Christ Church and Bodleian libraries. To obtain copies of these items will require significant funds for photocopying and mailing services; however, these costs will be substantially lower than travelling to the UK and Canada and across the US to work in the archives personally.